THE CROSS-CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT OF HOTEL EXPATRIATES IN MALAYSIA: THE MEDIATING EFFECTS OF COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION

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THE CROSS-CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT OF HOTEL EXPATRIATES IN MALAYSIA: THE MEDIATING EFFECTS OF COMMUNICATION AND INTERACTION

A Thesis Submitted to the College of Arts and Sciences in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy Universiti Utara Malaysia

BY
HASLINA BT. HALIM

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Abstract

Despite the abundance of research in the area of expatriation, the growth of hotel industry and the increase in the number of people serving abroad in the industry, there remains a relative lack of empirical research investigating the mediating effects of variables such as communication and interaction on expatriate adjustment. Therefore, the main purpose of this study is to investigate the mediating effects of communication and interaction in the adjustment of hotel expatriates in Malaysia. The study also investigates differences in the patterns of adjustment between organizational expatriates (OEs) and self-initiated expatriates (SIEs). Besides, relationships between individual, organizational and nonwork factors and expatriate adjustment are determined and the most influential predictors of expatriate adjustment are also identified. The U-Curve Theory and Social Learning Theory guided this thesis, which used a survey to measure the attitudes and opinions of the 203 respondents comprised of expatriates working in the Malaysian hotel industry. Multiple statistical tests were used to analyze data and ensure the reliability and validity of the instruments. Results revealed that communication and interaction partially mediated the relationships between individual, organizational and nonwork variables and expatriate adjustment. The results also showed that OEs and SIEs in the hotel industry did not differ significantly in their adjustment but there were significant differences in the pattern of adjustment of expatriates from different regions. Previous international experience, social support and family adjustment showed significant positive relationships with expatriate adjustment. Meanwhile, social support and family adjustment were the most influential predictors of expatriate adjustment. The findings are significant for the industry and also contributed to new empirical findings to the literature on expatriation and cross-cultural adjustment.

Keywords: Expatriate adjustment; Personality; Communication and interaction; Human resource support; Social support
**Abstrak**


**Kata Kunci:** Penyesuaian ekspatriat, Personaliti, Komunikasi dan interaksi, Sokongan sumber manusia, Sokongan sosial
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<td>CAS</td>
<td>Communicative Adaptability Scale</td>
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<td>EPP</td>
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<td>Gross National Income</td>
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Advances in modern technologies have significantly reduced the spatial and temporal barriers previously constraining transnational intercourse. As noted by Samovar, Porter and McDaniel (2010), global communication links and its ability to effect rapid, efficient movement of goods globally have created a growing international economic interdependency among countries of the world. Reich (1991) points out that those geographical boundaries are no longer a concern to international business. The process of internationalization and market expansion does not only lead to the transfer of management styles, products and services but also technology, corporate culture, organizational and management policies and practices to its foreign offices (Nickson, 1999). For many companies also the practice is believed to be logical and an unavoidable step in developing their own competitive potential (Harzing & Ruysseveldt, 2004). In hospitality companies for example, even though there are still a huge number of small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that are unlikely to expand their business overseas, many have actually expanded their businesses abroad. Go and Pine (1995) suggest that even in the hotel industry, the weak growth opportunities in the “slow growth” industrial economies are pushing firms to internationalize their business. The expanding markets in the Third World and developing countries for example, have opened up the opportunity for developed nations to expand their markets in that particular region.
The contents of the thesis is for internal user only
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